

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, May 11, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 1331 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C. May 11th., 1898? My dear Alec:

Your letter from Truro telling me that the trouble in your head continued troubled me greatly — and I telegraphed at once to know how you were. I did not think it a fair or generous or kind thing for you to answer me as you did in a telegram. That was no answer at all. I have telegraphed again and hope for a more satisfactory reply. I spoke to Dr. Simpson about you last night and he said he thought that the old-fashioned remedy of blood letting would be good for you. He said you were very full-blooded and there was great tension on the blood vessels, and that blood-letting relieved that tension. He said he was himself full-blooded and last summer when it was so hot and he was not well they took a pint and a half of blood from him and he felt the good effects immediately. I would much prefer believing that the trouble with you is due to torpid liver rather than that there is anything seriously wrong with the machinery of your head, and I do wish you would proceed upon that assumption and see what comes of it. You know that it has been proved over and over again that in certain cases there is nothing so deceptive as our sensations. We will have a toothache in the front upper tooth, which the doctor will relieve by filling a lower back tooth, a pain in the little toe may be relieved by an operation on the brain. — Hence I cannot see anything improbable in Dr. Sowers' assertion that the pain in your head is due to weight in your liver. Now his argument as I understand it is that the liver is loaded up and clogged by a heavy weight of refuse due to your not having exercised sufficiently to keep the passage clear — and this weight and clogging is now so heavy 2 that the ordinary means of clearing the liver — proper exercise — will no longer suffice. In fact it is so heavy that you cannot start to carry it. — A man with a heavy burden of course feels it's weight less as he sits down — when he begins to shoulder it and try to

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walk it hurts him, his shoulders and back ache — finally his head aches, the perspiration pours from his face. — Now the doctor wants by means of the pill to break up this load in small pieces so that it shall drop off you and relieved of this load you can walk freely and actively and thus keep it from re-accumulating. — As it is now, perhaps if you had sufficient resolution to get up and stagger under your load — no matter how heavy it was — it might by degrees fall apart and drop from you — but at the cost of great suffering — much prolonged — that would leave you exhausted. — Now my darling please feel that you belong to me — and you must give me some rights over my property — Please, please, please take the pill for my sake.

Today is warm for the first time since you left — but there is a cool breeze blowing.

With much love, Your own,